

that would make the content more diverse and demonstrate better the multitude of interactions between the British and the local people.

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Murat Metinsoy, *The Power of the People: Everyday Resistance and Dissent in the Making of Modern Turkey, 1923–38*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2021, xi + 405 pages.
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The scholarship about the early Turkish Republic has transformed significantly in the past two decades. Historians of the period have moved away from a focus on the state, the political institutions, and the leaders to the society as well as the interaction between state and society. Rather than working from either the dominant assumption of a top-down authoritarian modernization process or social class and class struggle as the key determinants of republican history, a growing number of historians are now interested in the lives of ordinary people, their experiences, and their contribution to the evolution of modern Turkey.

Murat Metinsoy's *The Power of the People* contributes to this growing scholarship. The author of an earlier book about everyday life in Turkey during World War II, in this new book Metinsoy examines state-society relations in 1920s and 1930s Turkey in three broad areas organized around three parts. Parts 1 and 2 deal with the peasantry and the urban labor, respectively, whereas Part 3 is dedicated to the sphere of cultural reforms and cultural change. Metinsoy is interested in understanding how ordinary citizens, the nonelite, coped with the state-initiated or state-controlled social, economic, political, and cultural changes and challenges in the formative years of the republic, a period characterized by an authoritarian modernization project, recovery from a decade of wars, and a major global economic crisis. This book is also an effort to understand how far the republican project of modernization transformed society and how ordinary people's resistance played a role in shaping that transformation.

Metinsoy takes the absence of peasant revolts or urban rebellions not as a sign of lack of dissent and opposition, but, similar to some of the recent scholarship, as an invitation to study the everyday politics of ordinary people. Inspired by the insights of the subaltern school, especially by James C. Scott's idea that people resort to the weapons of the weak and everyday forms of resistance in the absence of opportunities for open protest and opposition, Metinsoy traces the everyday politics of peasants, workers, and others he defines as nonelite, in the interwar period.

The idea that Scott's notion of the weapons of the weak might provide a useful framework for understanding the early republican period has already been suggested. What is original here is that Metinsoy makes a comprehensive and sustained effort to apply that framework in multiple fields, including two social groups (peasants and urban labor) and several areas of the Kemalist cultural reforms. The first two sections are more original

than the last, which has been studied and written about more widely. Drawing on a wide range of primary sources including government documents, contemporary newspapers and magazines, memoirs, travelers' accounts, biographies, literary sources such as novels, as well as earlier sociological studies, Metinsoy argues that the small everyday acts of resistance produced wider policy consequences at the national level, beyond the immediate relief they provided to the individual peasant or laborer. In other words, Metinsoy claims that by looking deeper into the everyday struggles of ordinary citizens, we gain a better appreciation of Turkey's twentieth-century transformations.

Part 1 deals with the everyday politics of the peasants. In the 1920s and 1930s, peasants constituted the vast majority of Turkey's population and the main source of state revenues. Metinsoy argues that, faced with high taxes, exorbitant prices set by the monopolies, oppressive aghas and landlords, tax collectors, gendarmes, forestry officials, and other agents of the state, ordinary peasants resorted to a rich repertoire of coping mechanisms and everyday forms of resistance. Peasants sent letters and petitions to the political leaders demanding lower taxes, tax forgiveness, or land. They frequently evaded the taxes by hiding their animals or disappearing from the village when the tax collector arrived. Peasants also became involved in smuggling of goods and resources such as tobacco, raki, salt, sugar, and the forests. Finally, peasant resistance occasionally took the form of banditry, which was more prone to direct and violent confrontation with the state than most other weapons of the weak. An interesting question that remains unresolved (especially for banditry and smuggling) is how much of this was peasant resistance to the policies of the republican state and how much was a continuation of opposition to the Ottoman state or was driven not by opposition but purely by economic concerns.

Part 2 examines the everyday politics of urban labor. Following E. P. Thompson and the British Marxist historians who view labor as a broader category than industrial workers, Metinsoy considers informal laborers (such as porters and peddlers) as well as artisans (such as handloom weavers, tailors, and shoemakers), and lower-income groups such as prayer leaders and teachers in this category, even though the focus remains on the workers. Here one might argue that professionals such as teachers deserve separate treatment rather than being lumped with this broad social category. It is very interesting to note in this section how cheap industrial imports and the competition from domestic factories pushed artisans such as tanners, felters, shoemakers, and handloom weavers out of business. Metinsoy traces how workers (and artisans) resorted to small acts of noncompliance such as deliberately slowing down the work, changing jobs, and absenteeism, as well as writing letters to the newspapers, petitioning employers and politicians, suing employers, strikes, walkouts, demonstrations, and protests. Notably, while some of these were individual coping mechanisms, others such as strikes and walkouts were collective forms of resistance. Workers' demands included pay raises, shorter hours, social security, better working conditions, and a labor law. Metinsoy shows that while not always successful, these weapons of the weak sometimes produced some immediate relief and benefit such as shorter hours or better pay; they also produced wider policy consequences such as playing a role in the passing of a labor law in 1936.

Part 3 turns to the everyday forms of resistance to the cultural reforms of the early republic, focusing on the Hat Law, women's unveiling, along with the application of the new Civil Code's ban on polygamy and popular practices such as faith healing

(üfürükçülük). The reforms are one aspect of the RPP (Republican People's Party) period that have received some attention in recent scholarship. For example, Nicole Van Os has examined the practice of polygamy after the republic and this reviewer has studied in detail the Hat Law and women's unveiling, working from many of the same archival sources and a similar theoretical premise. Unfortunately, the author has refrained from engaging that recent scholarship directly, failing to acknowledge his debt to earlier scholars.

In this section Metinsoy demonstrates how places like mosques, coffeehouses, private homes, and Qur'an classes offered spaces for voicing discontent and dissent, whereas rumors and "seditious placards" served as informal media for expressing criticism. While letters and petitions generally worked as a means of voicing concerns and making demands, the state's sensitivity toward its reforms and the anger provoked by the same reforms among the opponents of the regime, led to the rise of rumors as well as anonymous letters and statements left in public places that were full of harsh criticism and hateful speech toward the new regime and its policies. The book contains interesting examples of such placards taken from the police archives.

Metinsoy's findings in this part of the book largely agree with the findings of the other recent research that the people generally avoided direct confrontation with the state officials yet evaded the laws and expressed their resentment in varieties of ways such as by secluding themselves in their homes or by wearing alternative forms of hats rather than the European style hat. Such decisions, of course, also had to do with economic and practical considerations. When it came to women's unveiling, similar to the men's early reactions to the hat reform, women also resorted to everyday acts of individual resistance such as secluding themselves in their homes, adding umbrellas to their outdoor clothing, or leaving their homes only in the privacy of nighttime darkness. Regarding unveiling, Metinsoy implicitly sides with the scholars who have argued in the Turkish context, as well as Soviet Central Asia, that unveiling challenged men's authority over women and thus the resistance to unveiling emerged in part in the form of patriarchal social pressure on women to remain veiled. It is worth bearing in mind here that the issue was not so much the headscarf of the peasant women, but the face veil that symbolized women's inferiority and prevented them from fully participating in social life.

Considering how peasants and workers responded to the policies of the early republic, it seems reasonably clear that economic grievances led to relatively more uniform individual and collective responses. However, when it came to the cultural field, it is harder to establish that the peasantry or the urban workers responded to the republican reforms in the same way. The author is clear about how one particular group, the Islamic scholars and prayer leaders, along with the members of the Ottoman establishment, were staunch opponents of the cultural and political reforms because of their losses in employment, economic resources, and social status. Interestingly, although Metinsoy does not discuss this, the religious scholars were also a key social group that the new regime attempted to integrate as a mediator of its reforms. At least to a degree, the state was able to utilize the Directorate of Religious Affairs and individual prayer leaders to communicate its ideology to the larger public.

Metinsoy concludes that from unveiling to polygamy, child marriage, and visits to saints' tombs, traditional social and cultural practices of the rural and provincial society survived the single party era. He argues that the preservation of these various patriarchal and religious practices and mindset became critical for the rise of political

Islam when the rural-to-urban migration intensified in the later decades of the twentieth century. However, rather than focusing on resistance alone, having considered a wide range of responses to the reforms, ranging from enthusiasm and active support to active resistance, this reviewer concluded that noncompliance was not necessarily a mark of resistance or opposition, and that the application of the cultural reforms was diverse, uneven and incomplete, but not nonexistent or marginal. In the long run, this is what ensured the survival of the secular republic into the twenty-first century.

Scholars might disagree about the exact legacy of the RPP period on the evolution of the Islamist movement or Turkey's democratization in the second half of the twentieth century. Nevertheless, Metinsoy's *The Power of the People* makes a significant contribution to our understanding of the social history of the early decades of the republic and the role of the ordinary people's everyday acts of resistance within that.

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Zerrin Özlem Biner, *States of Dispossession: Violence and Precarious Coexistence in Southeast Turkey*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2020, ix + 264 pages.

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Zerrin Özlem Biner's book revolves around dispossession and the everyday violence in one of the Southeast Turkish provinces, Mardin, at the margins of the state. This is a book about the affective and violent relations of Kurds, Syrians, Arabs, and the state within the haunted and ruined lands. It offers a portrait of the layers of graveyards from 1915, the Armenian genocide, to the state of emergency between 1987 and 1999, to yet another state of emergency in 2016. Biner explores "the banal and the everyday so as to capture the state's powerful effects together with the agency of people who enact disgust, fear, support, and complicity with the state" (p. 18). The book addresses dispossession and ruination as well as constant affective, material, and legal struggle over space between the state, PKK (Kurdistan Worker's Party), provincial governors, cadastral surveyors, lawyers, treasure hunters, cultural heritage explorers, Syrians in diaspora, monastery foundations, tribal lords, and village guards in the nexus of bribery, traditions of gift, and debt in Mardin. Biner opens the door to the art of storytelling embedded in stone buildings, monasteries, graveyards, vineyards, and tunnels in basements, walls, and roads.

The book consists of six chapters. The first chapter is a portrait of Mardin, populated with Kurds, who immigrated to the city due to the war between the state and Kurdish guerrilla forces in the 1990s; Christian Syrians, whose number has been diminishing since Sayfo mass slaughter and deportation of Christian Syrians in 1915–; and Arabs who travel between Turkey and Syria. Biner focuses on the restoration of Mardin in the 2000s as part of an effort to get the city to be selected as one of the UNESCO World Heritage Sites. For this purpose, the Turkish government has